

Message Text

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DRAFTED BY NEA:AFN:MWILEY:HE

APPROVED BY THE SECRETARY

NEA - MR. SAUNDERS

NEA - MR. ATHERTON

NEA/EGY - MR. MATTHEWS

P - MR. SISCO

S/S - MR. MOFFAT

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 130498

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, EG, LY

SUBJECT: US-LIBYAN RELATIONS

FOR AMBASSADOR

1. LIBYAN GOVERNMENT DELIVERED A NOTE TO THE STATE DEPARTMENT ON APRIL 14 REQUESTING AGREEMENT FOR MOHAMED YUNIS KHALIFA AS AMBASSADOR TO THE UNITED STATES. ON APRIL 15 THE LIBYAN GOVERNMENT INFORMED OUR CHARGE IN TRIPOLI ORALLY THAT THE CEILING ON US EMBASSY PERSONNEL IN LIBYA HAD BEEN LIFTED. THE SECRETARY HAS APPROVED A RECOMMENDATION THAT WE ACCEPT MR. KHALIFA AS AMBASSADOR IN WASHINGTON AND THAT WE INFORM THE LIBYANS OF OUR WILLINGNESS TO INCREASE THE CEILING ON LIBYAN EMBASSY PERSONNEL IN WASHINGTON ON CONDITION THAT BOTH OF THESE STEPS FIRST BE DISCUSSED WITH PRESIDENT SADAT AND THAT THESE MOVES NOT BE IMPLEMENTED
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UNTIL OUR MIDDLE EAST REASSESSMENT IS COMPLETED.

2. DURING YOUR NEXT CONVERSATION WITH PRESIDENT SADAT YOU SHOULD ADVISE HIM OF OUR INCLINATION TO ACCEPT KHALIFA AS

LIBYAN AMBASSADOR IN WASHINGTON AND OF OUR INTENTION TO NEGOTIATE A NEW AND HIGHER CEILING ON LIBYAN EMBASSY PERSONNEL IN WASHINGTON WITH THE LIBYAN GOVERNMENT. BOTH STEPS WILL TAKE PLACE AFTER THE COMPLETION OF OUR MIDDLE EAST

REASSESSMENT. WE WOULD WELCOME ANY COMMENTS PRESIDENT MAY HAVE.

3. IF PRESIDENT SADAT QUESTIONS YOU ON THESE MOVES YOU MAY WISH TO POINT OUT THAT THE ABSENCE OF A US AMBASSADOR IN TRIPOLI AND A LIBYAN AMBASSADOR IN WASHINGTON WAS NOT THE RESULT OF A DECISION BY EITHER GOVERNMENT TO EXPEL OR NOT TO ACCEPT AN AMBASSADOR FROM THE OTHER. THE EXISTING SITUATION CAME ABOUT WHEN THE USG DECIDED NOT TO REPLACE AMBASSADOR PALMER UPON HIS DEPARTURE AT THE END OF HIS NORMAL TOUR BECAUSE AMBASSADOR PALMER HAD NOT BEEN RECEIVED AT LEVELS OF THE LIBYAN GOVERNMENT APPROPRIATE FOR HIS RANK AND HAD BEEN ABLE TO HAVE VERY LITTLE CONTACT WITH ANY LIBYAN CITIZENS. THE LIBYAN DECISION NOT TO REPLACE THEIR AMBASSADOR IN WASHINGTON FOLLOWED OUR DECISION NOT TO REPLACE PALMER WITH ANOTHER AMBASSADOR. THE ACCEPTANCE OF THE LIBYAN AMBASSADOR THEREFORE REPRESENTS NO SIGNIFICANT CHANGE IN USG POLICY AND MIGHT BE A STEP TOWARD BETTER COMMUNICATION BETWEEN OUR GOVERNMENTS. THE INCREASED NUMBER OF OFFICERS IN THE LIBYAN EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON ARE NEEDED PRIMARILY TO TAKE CARE OF THE LARGE NUMBER OF LIBYAN STUDENTS STUDYING IN THE US.

4. IF ASKED, YOU MAY ALSO TELL PRESIDENT SADAT THAT WE HAVE NO PRESENT INTENTION OF ASSIGNING AN AMBASSADOR TO TRIPOLI ALTHOUGH WE WOULD BE WILLING TO DO SO IF THERE IS SOME TREND TOWARD AN IMPROVEMENT IN RELATIONS BETWEEN OUR TWO GOVERNMENTS AND IF WE HAVE AN INDICATION THAT HE WOULD BE RECEIVED AT APPROPRIATE LEVELS BY THE LIBYAN GOVERNMENT.

5. FYI: WHILE WE ARE ASKING YOU TO INFORM SADAT OF OUR PLAN, WE WILL WANT YOUR JUDGMENT OF HIS REACTION BEFORE ANY
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STEP IS TAKEN. WE DO NOT WANT TO PUT HIM IN A POSITION OF MAKING A DECISION FOR WHICH WE MUST ASSUME RESPONSIBILITY, BUT WE NATURALLY WANT TO TAKE HIS REACTION INTO ACCOUNT BEFORE MOVING. KISSINGER

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